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**AFGHANISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Apprenticeships Provide Job Skills to At-risk Youth

**Pilot apprenticeship program in Jalalabad offers on-the-job training and stable careers.**



Photo: USAID/ADP/E

*A young man learns how to run a tailoring business as part of an apprenticeship program for day laborers in Jalalabad.*

*Thirty young men gained trade skills and well-paid job opportunities through an apprenticeship program that will expand throughout eastern Afghanistan.*

Young men who lack an education or trade skills are left with few opportunities in Afghanistan. Manual day labor jobs are often the only legal employment options available, but the work is sporadic and the pay is not sufficient to support a family. To provide these at-risk young men with practical job training and steady, well-paid employment, USAID launched an apprenticeship program in Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province.

Over a period of four months, the first class of 30 young men received practical training in a variety of trades including tailoring, carpentry, metalwork, mobile phone repair, and car body repair. All participants were the sole breadwinners for their families and were determined to increase their job skills and earning potential to improve their families' future.

Before beginning their apprenticeships, participants had difficulty securing daily work. They frequently accepted hard labor jobs that paid low wages amounting to approximately \$3 per day. In comparison, during the apprenticeship program, they earned a living wage from their trainers, who all continued to employ their apprentices following the conclusion of the program. If the apprentices continue learning their new trades for an additional six months, they will possess the skills to open their own successful businesses.

The pilot project has provided successful outcomes for young men in Jalalabad, and USAID plans to expand the program throughout the eastern region of Afghanistan. This will allow a large number of jobless young men at the district and village levels to learn new professions; find stable, well-paying jobs; and support their families.

*The apprentice program is one of several USAID/Afghanistan initiatives to provide job skills and increase employment. From 2005-2008, the Alternative Development Program/Eastern Region trained 8,568 men and women in business skills and created nearly 17,000 jobs.*